

April 1995

## Book Pricing Update: A Closer Look at the Social Sciences

Celia Scher Wagner  
*Blackwell*

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### Recommended Citation

Wagner, Celia Scher (1995) "Book Pricing Update: A Closer Look at the Social Sciences," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 7: Iss. 2, Article 6.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.1718>

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# Book Pricing Update

## A Closer Look at the Social Sciences

by Celia Scher Wagner (Blackwell)

The last "closer look" column surveyed publishing and pricing in Architecture and the Arts over the past five years. This second column in the series takes a closer look at the Social Sciences.

Since 1990, the number of new academic monographs in the Social Sciences has dropped about 6%. Two factors contributed to the decline: the overall number of new academic monographs has shrunk slightly and, at the same, time there has been a proportionate shift in the subject focus of new titles. A growing portion of new monographs fall into the Science, Technology & Medicine (S/T/M) subject areas, and a correspond-

ingly smaller portion fall into the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

The overall decline in Social Science was not evenly spread across the board, however (see chart below top). Academic publishers in the Social Sciences are publishing fewer titles in Gerontology, Psychology (especially the less-academic Personal Psychology category), International Relations, Criminology, and Sociology; and more titles in Race Relations, Anthropology, Women's Studies, and Gender Studies. Particular topics have flourished, or faded, in popularity as well: the number of titles about women and minorities in business has grown in recent years, as has the number of titles



about "downsizing," "rightsizing," and "corporate reengineering." At the same time, the number of titles about employee benefits seems to be dwindling. Titles about the religious and/or political right in America fell off a bit in 1992, but saw

Number of Monographic Titles in Selected Social Science Subjects

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Percent Change
Anthropology	105	131	122	141	122	16%
Sociology	716	660	603	658	628	-12%
Psychology (Theory)	625	561	486	511	489	-22%
Psychology (Applied)	168	179	90	101	83	-51%
Economics	1,130	1,103	1,153	1,171	1,094	-3%
Political Science	1,005	1,053	1,114	1,095	1,003	0%
International Relations	533	448	453	497	382	-28%
Education	951	975	982	966	1,100	16%
Business & Management	1,675	1,745	1,702	1,815	1,732	3%
Race Relations	344	412	426	374	459	33%
Criminology	282	273	251	281	245	-13%
Women & Gender Studies	287	285	316	347	330	15%
Gerontology	53	58	44	51	35	-34%
All Social Sciences:	11,417	11,438	10,839	11,117	10,683	-6%

Average List Prices in Selected Social Science Subjects

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Percent Change
Anthropology	\$37.92	\$38.61	\$43.85	\$46.81	\$45.61	20%
Sociology	\$32.08	\$36.79	\$39.65	\$40.16	\$43.60	36%
Psychology (Theory)	\$42.09	\$39.39	\$49.06	\$49.10	\$51.32	22%
Psychology (Applied)	\$25.39	\$27.66	\$33.66	\$31.91	\$30.64	21%
Economics	\$43.54	\$46.60	\$48.94	\$51.95	\$54.14	24%
Political Science	\$34.73	\$39.31	\$41.36	\$41.55	\$41.53	20%
International Relations	\$36.08	\$36.04	\$39.21	\$41.21	\$40.58	12%
Education	\$33.61	\$36.92	\$38.01	\$40.04	\$40.62	21%
Business & Management	\$39.27	\$38.54	\$42.41	\$44.86	\$45.19	15%
Race Relations	\$36.13	\$41.35	\$41.31	\$40.39	\$37.68	4%
Criminology	\$31.40	\$33.40	\$36.15	\$37.54	\$44.16	41%
Women & Gender Studies	\$32.87	\$35.63	\$37.37	\$38.48	\$41.50	26%
Gerontology	\$31.16	\$36.03	\$42.38	\$41.66	\$41.83	34%
All Social Sciences:	\$35.86	\$37.84	\$41.79	\$44.06	\$45.13	26%
All New Academic Titles:	\$43.64	\$45.63	\$51.32	\$52.26	\$53.05	22%

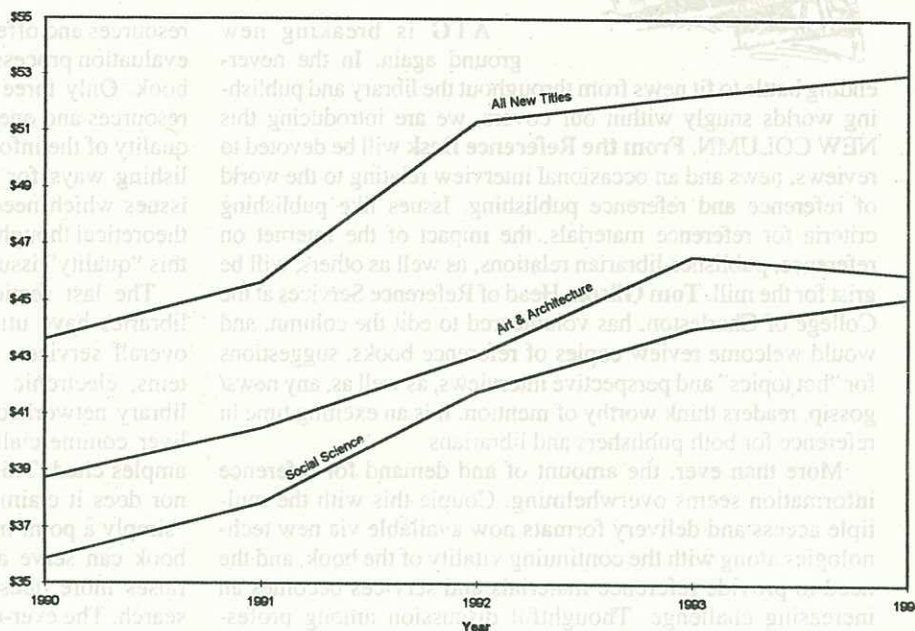


a large increase in 1993 and 1994.

Book prices in the Social Sciences rose 26%, from 1990's average of \$35.86 to last year's average of \$45.13. The rise for all academic monographs was 22% over the same five years, so Social Science went up at a somewhat faster than average rate (see chart previous page bottom). The graph at right plots average prices in Art & Architecture and Social Science against average prices for all new academic monographs. Although the order has remained the same for the past five years, with Social Science at the bottom, Art & Architecture in the middle, and the "average" monograph on top, the high rate of increase for Social Science means that prices in this category are fast approaching those in Art & Architecture.

Within the Social Sciences, the largest price rises occurred in Criminology (41%), Sociology (36%), Gerontology (34%), and Women's Studies & Gender Studies (26%). The price chart also shows that increases in individual categories are quite variable. While the combined Social Sciences increased steadily in price each year, fewer than half of the subcategories inched steadily upward. The majority took at least one dip in price along the way.

**Average Prices of New Monographs  
1990 to 1994**



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